

Ann Hamilton
37 Monument Rd
Richmond, NH

Planning Board Hearing 12/1/20

My name is Ann Hamilton. I live at 37 Monument Rd with my husband and our young sons ages 9 and 4. We built our home here 14 years ago. We are the closest property and home to the proposed tower site. We are the most adversely affected by this proposed tower site. If this tower is built on this site we feel that we have no other choice but to move our family to keep them safe.

I would like to start by asking why the Public Hearing was not on the town's website? Or why there is never an agenda ever posted prior to meetings or hearings? Residents of this town should have been able to see ahead of time what the purpose of this or any other hearing or meeting is. Shouldn't we utilize the technology that we already have and post it so the public is aware that this meeting is happening? Seems a little shady to not post it. Or does it just work better to leave our town residents in the dark?

Also, why are we not utilizing zoom for these hearings? Out of the total of four abutters, two have out of state addresses. Maybe they have not been here due to covid restrictions. If this meeting was in Massachusetts tonight we all would not be attending because of travel restrictions.

Does the Planning Board follow our Town's Ordinance?

The ordinance that starts with 101 Purpose, "To promote the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants"

My family does not feel that ours, along with other fellow Richmond residents, and the general public's health, safety, and welfare is being protected.

The Final Report on Commission to study the Environmental and Health Effects of Evolving 5G Technology states on page 100,

“ Best engineering practice would therefore apply a set-back requirement for new cellular towers, including 5G micro-towers. This set-back for all new cell towers should be 500 Meters which translates to 1,640 feet. “

The proposed tower was originally stated to be 925 feet from the nearest home being my home. This puts the tower 715 feet too close to my home per the new recommendation. I am asking you to please listen to this recommendation so my home is not within the new recommended setback. If we were to stay living in our home I don't want to wonder everyday what harm and danger is happening to my innocent children's bodies because we are too close to this tower.

Does the Planning Board vote again on ordinance 1105 Special Exception? If so, will you please tell me how you use and enjoy your property.

My family will no longer have use and enjoyment of our property. My kids will not have a safe or enjoyable place to play or live. We strongly believe that we will see this proposed eyesore of a tower from 7 rooms in our home. Two being bedrooms. And our skyline will be consumed by the proposed tower. We will lose the use of our relaxing deck and backyard. We believe that we will have the potential of excessive noise from the tower, alarms, hvac systems, maintenance vehicles. We believe we may have a glare off the tower. The tower in Rindge, NH has quite the glare if you drive past it. All things not typical of a residential neighborhood.

Also, I would like to remind the board that my husband and I have submitted letters from local real estate brokers stating that our property value will likely decrease and our home will be less marketable. These again are brokers from Jaffrey and Rindge, the companies who will likely be selling our home for us if this tower is built because we are forced to move our children to a safer home and town. Mr. Grill also lied to the ZBA telling them that property values are not a basis to deny the applicant

according to federal law and per the minutes from the September 9th ZBA hearing the Board took view of the criteria with the law in mind.

Again our town ordinance 1105.1.3 Special exception clearly states, "The proposed use will not adversely affect the use, enjoyment, or value of adjacent property. In making determination, the board will consider such factors as excessive noise, traffic, dust, glare, odors, or other conditions that are associated with the proposed use but are not typical conditions for that area."

So, in my opinion the proposed tower goes against ordinance 1105.1.3 because it will adversely affect my property along with the other adjacent properties.

I would like to ask ITW how you determine that the applicant's property is truly the best site for the proposed tower?

Mr. Grill stated at the September 9th hearing, "The site chosen is as remote as you can find"

Does Massachusetts have a different definition of remote than here in New Hampshire?

In my opinion remote does not mean next to someone's backyard. More specifically innocent children's backyard. Remote is not having two of the tower's fall zones directly abutting Christmas tree lots. A place where innocent members of the public could be injured or killed by unpredictable flying ice.

I have a question for ITW, how do you know that the owner of lot 407-94-03 was not interested? Can you tell me the owner of the property?

The owner is my husband and I and we never were approached by your company. Also, why is lot 407-94-04 not on your list of potential sites? Again, this is a property owned by my husband and I. ITW claims that the applicant's property is the best choice in our town when they never bothered to check these two properties that are at minimum 352 from the proposed site. Realistically, our properties, had we been contacted, are better sites for a proposed tower. Properties that don't already have a retail business along with a residence on it. And, we already have the electricity

so less invasive to run new lines. I feel ITW has lied to our town that this is the best site. I feel that is the first site that when they flashed a money sign in front of someone and they took the offer.

Knowing that ITW has lied about checking two of the closest properties to the proposed site, I would think as a town our gut should tell us that they really don't care if this is truly the best site, they are just here to make a buck.

On the Site Plan sheet 3, it shows an ice bridge. Can ITW explain to me what the ice bridge does?

So, the unpredictable ice will never fly off this tower an unknown number of feet or in any direction?

Can ITW over engineer this tower so there is not a chance that this could ever happen? Can ITW make it 100 percent guaranteed safe and fool proof?

I'm guessing that they can not control mother nature's unpredictability.

We all remember the ice storm of 2008. Everything was covered in ice.

Now imagine living next to a 175 foot tower covered in that same unpredictable ice that at any given time could blow off and god forbid severely hurt or kill someone. Doesn't sound like something anyone would want to chance being near.

On the topic of catastrophic dangers and damages, who is responsible if god forbid my family or anyone in the general public, for example his christmas tree customers, are injured or killed by this tower?

The Taylor's, ITW, the Cellular carrier companies, or the Town of Richmond.

I would think the Town would hold some responsibility since the Planning Board and the Zoning Board would have deemed this a safe location by passing it. I feel if god forbid these accidents happened, our town could be bankrupted in one foul swoop. This proposed tower is directly in the middle of a residential neighborhood which is risky . But, it also is a direct part of a property that is a retail business. This creates even more of a liability risk

because there are so many more people who could be injured then sue the town.

I have a question for ITW in regards to the propagation maps. You show yellow representing -84 dBm and cyan representing -87 dBm. Is it correct that every 3 db increase doubles the signal strength? So, on your propagation map are you saying that the yellow area would have double the signal strength of the cyan?

Can you tell me the threshold signal strength level for in building/residential at which most users would function reliably?

I have a print out from the Center for Municipal Solutions that says residential threshold signal strength for in building/residential is -85 dBm.

So, if your propagation map is not accurate than we as a town, yellow area may not even be at the threshold to receive reliable service in our homes?

According to an article from the Center for Municipal Solutions propagation maps can be manipulated.

“Are propagation maps able to be ‘manipulated’ to show a desired result, such as the inability of a co-located facility to work rather than building a new tower?”

“Yes, very easily, and manipulating propagation maps is frequently done in an attempt to ‘justify’ something the applicant wants, but that is not allowed under local regulations, in other words, to ‘justify’ a waiver or relief from the local government.”

I believe that ITW has done just that, manipulated the propagation maps they have presented to the town.

On their propagation maps that show in yellow the “Great Service” aka as “The best case scenario” of coverage for the town could POSSIBLY receive. They state they used 7 existing towers in and around the Town of Richmond.

ITW explains that the assumptions used

A) That each of the nationwide carriers, US Cellular, T-Mobile, Verizon and AT&T was located on each area tower."

This is a lie because Old Turnpike Rd Tower in Richmond only has one carrier, AT&T.

Bard Building tower in Fitzwilliam only has two carriers, US Cellular and AT&T.

The Pinnacle Tower in Fitzwilliam only has one carrier, T-Mobile.

So, out of the 7 existing towers in and around the area of Richmond three of the towers do not have all carriers. ITW assumption A can not be true.

B) That each of these carriers was at the top of these towers.

Hard to be on the top of the tower if the carrier is not anywhere on the tower.

C) That each carrier was using a PCS radio frequency of 1900 MHZ.

Again, can't use the 1900 MHZ frequency when the carrier is in fact not on the tower to begin with.

I feel the residents of Richmond deserve the truth and not the false assumption results that ITW is presenting. Demand that we as a town get the true results of what coverage we will actually be getting using true assumptions. Be truthful that all but one tower is a single carrier. Far from your lie that they have ALL 4 nationwide carriers.

I ask you, the Board, do you feel confident with what appears to be manipulated propagation maps?

On the topic of carriers, at the September 9th hearing Attorney Grill was asked what carriers were contracted, he stated that they are not lined up yet."

So, we are all here tonight supposingly talking about a cell tower but in reality we are talking about a 175 foot structure not a cellular tower.

If this tower is built and does not have carriers how can it be considered a Cellular Tower?

Ordinance 309.1 "No building or structure shall exceed 2 1/2 stories or 35 feet in height. "

Ordinance 309.2 " Exemptions The height limitation shall not apply to chimneys, antennas, or steeples; or cell towers and wind turbines."

If there are no cellular carriers yet contracted to go on the proposed tower, I feel it is a 175 foot lightning rod being built way above our town's height restriction per the ordinance. The Richmond Hazard Mitigation Plan states that cell towers increase the chances of lightning strikes. This puts my home and property at risk of being damaged. This also puts the natural resources being any of the surrounding woods in danger of fires. Again, stated in the hazard mitigation plan that lightning increases the chance of forest fires. We just went through a drought.

Other towers in other towns, including the Turnpike Rd Tower, have had representatives from cellular companies attending their public hearings. Why, because they had an actual planned contract of installation before they came in front of the boards. They didn't waste people's time on assuming carriers would come after the tower was built.

And, on the topic of Turnpike Rd tower, it was stated that the goal of the tower was to supply the whole town with cellular service. Yet, here we are tonight because that was obviously inaccurate.

Grill stated on September 9th that, " The Hamilton's will have no view of the tower to the best of our knowledge."

How does any of us know that my family will have NO view of the tower without a balloon test? Shouldn't we have already done this before they can honestly state that we will have NO view. And, if it turns out that we most certainly will see a 175 foot tower in our backyard what is the plan then because as they stated we will not see it? Or are we just stuck living with the atrocious view because ITW and Mr. Grill made an assumption that was not backed by a balloon test to prove otherwise?

This company sure likes to assume things that are not backed by accurate facts!

On the topic of the view of the tower what is the Board planning to use as a buffering or screening.

On the application for special exception ITW states they are using ordinance 1105.4 Commercial or Light Industrial Uses.

1105.4.6 " If proposed use is located adjacent to a residential use, there will be buffering or screening as determined appropriate by the Planning Board during Site Plan Review."

Also, has the Planning Board done a site walk of the proposed site?

If you have not done a site walk, how would you even know what type of buffering you will need. I think the only option is Red Wood trees to obscure the view. But, I'm just assuming that would fix the view problem.

I strongly feel that the wetlands delineation could very well be inaccurate. My family has walked the property lines many times and it seems peculiar to us that during the summer, the prime growing season, our property is green and alive, yet the applicant's is brown and killed off by something. Someone with the applicant's background in pesticides would potentially know the best way to alter his landscape and potentially change the results of a wetlands delineation. A wetlands delineation that was conducted in January 2020 not during the growing season. The US Army Corps of Engineers states that wetlands delineations should be performed during the growing season to get the most accurate results. We already know that the proposed tower borders multiple wetlands and that the tower's fall zone includes two wetlands. But do we truly know where these wetlands are? Or does anybody even care where they are?

And why would a member of the Conservation Commission want to put two wetlands at risk anyway. I thought our Conservation Commission's purpose was to conserve and protect nature and natural resources.

Also, our property already has erosion from the applicant's property. This could potentially get worse if the proposed tower is built. What is the plan for storm drainage so it does not run down to our property?

Also, 1105.4.2 " No noise, airborne particles, vibrations, lights, or other activities associated with the business shall pose a nuisance to abutting properties"

If the tower is built we request seismic studies done before, during and after construction. Who is responsible if our property is damaged. Our well, our well pump, our drinking water, our foundation. Who do we contact?

Also, 1105.4.5 " The road providing access to the property must be paved and deemed by the ZBA, in consultation with the selectman and the Road Agent, to be capable of accommodating the traffic anticipated from the proposed use"

Have any of the above mentioned people looked at the property and the access road? The ZBA said on 9/9/20 that they don't do site walks, even though there are plenty of minutes stating they have done plenty of site walks, so we know they voted on an unseen piece of property. But again I ask if any of the above mentioned people looked at the property?

So, will the applicant's driveway through the Christmas Tree Lots and the access road all be paved?

Who is responsible for maintaining the access road? If the responsibility is the Taylor's and god forbid an emergency with the tower, a tower collapse, a tower fire and the applicant's aren't home at the time to have maintained the road we just hope for the best? We would be handing the responsibility to an elderly couple. More reason it should not be on a residential property shared with a retail business.

In my opinion the long way to get to the access road already seems congested by a retail business and a personal residence already being on the property. To add another business to the property does not seem like it is lessening congestion only adding to it. What if there is an emergency and

the applicant's retail customers are blocking the driveway? The only road to the proposed tower.

On September 10, 2020 The Windswept Mountain View Christmas Tree Farm posted the following on their facebook page,

" Our staff will be regulating parking and when parking is full we will not be able to allow other guests to come up the driveway until others leave.

When parking is full we encourage you to do a loop around town and come back to check in with the staff member at the bottom of the driveway. The town does not want lines formed down the road, please refrain from doing this."

It sounds like the Windswept Mountain View Tree Farm, along with the residents of this property, are already aware that they have traffic congestion issues. This is just another reason I believe this particular property is not an appropriate site for this proposed tower.

My family is not against this town getting cellular service. We are however against this proposed site. Please find a better, more remote location. A location not surrounded by residential homes. A location that is not potentially endangering the lives of people, This town talks about we need this for emergency sake. You all could be creating a very serious emergency situation by using this proposed sight.

In closing, I ask the Board please consider the valid points that I have made tonight. Please follow our Town's Ordinance and recognize that this proposed site goes against what our ordinance says about the adjacent properties. Please consider the new recommendation from the Commision to study 5G and make ITW follow the recommendation.

Protect our community members, the general public. Please protect my family, my sons, from having to move from the only home my children have known, to ensure that they are safe.

Thank You,
Ann Hamilton